

## Teachers' Perceptions on the Implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education and Its Effect on Pupils' Sexual Behavior

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### ABSTRACT

The research examined teacher perceptions about CSE implementation. The researchers employed a quantitative descriptive–correlational design which involved collecting data through a validated survey from 25 selected teachers at 7 elementary schools. The instrument covered teachers' demographic profiles, their perceptions of CSE implementation (curriculum and content, instructional strategies and materials, school administrative support, and parent and community involvement), and their views on pupils' sexual behavior (knowledge and awareness, attitudes and values). The results showed that 92% of respondents identified as female while 96% of participants reported being married and 48% of respondents belonged to the age group of 41 to 50 years and 36% of respondents had more than 16 years of teaching experience and 52% of respondents earned a master's degree.

## **INTRODUCTION**

School implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) has been of particular interest in recent years, especially in terms of its potential influence on the sexual behavior of students. CSE seeks to equip young learners with the knowledge and skills required to make competent choices regarding their sexual health and relationships. It is believed that sex education early in life may contribute to better sexual behaviors and attitudes among teens, lowering sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancy (UNESCO, 2018)

Teachers are instrumental in the effective delivery of CSE programs, as their attitudes can positively or negatively affect students' implementation and acceptance of these curricula. Teachers' own views on sex education can determine whether they are inclined to teach controversial subjects, which, in turn, affects student motivation and academic performance. Understanding teachers' attitudes is essential to crafting meaningful training programs that address their concerns and boost their confidence in delivering CSE.

In the early school years, when the basic attitudes towards sexuality are shaped, it is vital to examine how teachers view the application of CSE and its eventual impact on the sexual behavior of students. Evidence indicates that more favorable teachers' attitudes toward CSE are associated with more extensive instruction and higher students' receptiveness (Bennett et al., 2021).

Given that there is less research explicitly focused on teachers' perceptions in the early stages of education alone, which are believed to be the years when they are molded and shaped to develop a better understanding. This study attempts to learn these views among school teachers at the primary level and examine how these might affect sexual behavior among their students as they move towards adolescence.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

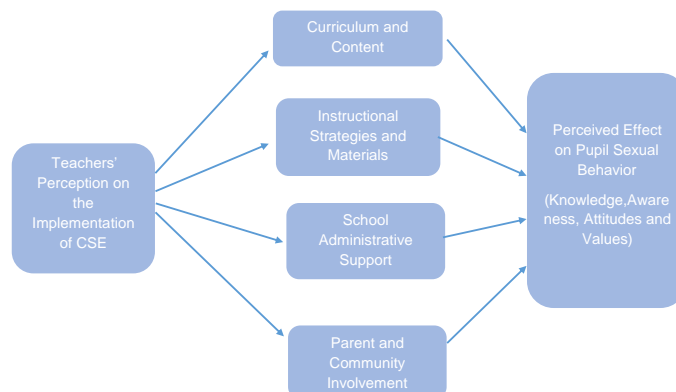
Recent literature indicates that pupils' sexual behavior is shaped by a combination of biological, psychological, and socio-cultural factors. Adolescents often engage in risky sexual behaviors such as early sexual initiation, unprotected sex, and multiple partners, increasing their vulnerability to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancies. In this context, School-based Sexual Education (SSE) and Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) are recognized as essential strategies for equipping young people with knowledge, skills, and values necessary for making informed and responsible decisions.

CSE extends beyond the prevention of pregnancy and diseases by promoting social-emotional learning, respect for diversity, healthy relationships, and awareness of rights and responsibilities. However, its implementation faces challenges, including cultural and religious barriers, limited teacher preparedness, and discomfort in addressing sensitive topics. Studies highlight that teacher motivation, training, and institutional support are critical in improving the effectiveness of sexuality education. Moreover, stakeholder collaboration, policy integration, and culturally sensitive approaches are necessary to ensure successful implementation.

Empirical evidence shows that effective CSE programs contribute to positive outcomes such as delayed sexual debut, increased use of protection, and improved communication about consent. Nevertheless, disparities persist due to differences in gender, cultural context, and access to accurate information. Therefore, a multifaceted approach involving education, communication, supportive environments, and community engagement is required to promote safe and healthy sexual behaviors among pupils.

This study is anchored on three theoretical frameworks. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory explains how multiple environmental layers influence both teachers' practices and pupils' behavior. Social Cognitive Theory highlights the interaction between personal factors, behavior, and environment, emphasizing the role of modeling and self-efficacy in learning. Meanwhile, the Health Belief Model explains how perceptions of risk, benefits, and barriers influence both teachers' willingness to teach CSE and pupils' behavioral decisions. Together, these theories provide a comprehensive foundation for understanding the dynamics of sexuality education and its impact on student behavior.

### *Conceptual Framework*



**Figure 1. Schematic Paradigm Showing the Relationship Between Teachers' Perceptions, Pupils' Sexual Behavior, and CSE Implementation**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a descriptive correlational design to examine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) and its effects on pupils' sexual behavior. The design enabled the researchers to describe existing conditions and identify relationships among variables without manipulation, providing insights into how teachers' attitudes may influence both instructional practices and pupils' behavior. The study was conducted in selected Guiuan South Elementary Mainland Schools, namely Cantahay Elementary School, Barbo Elementary School, Taytay Integrated School, Pagnamitan Elementary School, Baras Elementary School, Ngolos Honeywell Elementary School, and Sulangan Central Elementary School, in order to capture diverse school contexts and understand how cultural norms and educational environments shape CSE implementation. The respondents consisted of 25 purposively selected teachers who met

predefined inclusion criteria related to their knowledge and experience in sex education, while those who did not meet these criteria were excluded to ensure consistency and reliability of data. Data were collected through a structured survey questionnaire composed of three main parts: demographic profile, teachers' perceptions of the level of CSE implementation, and perceived effects of CSE on pupils' sexual behavior, with a total of 40 items measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Not at All" to "To a Very High Extent." The instrument covered key dimensions such as curriculum and content, instructional strategies and materials, school administrative support, and parent and community involvement, as well as pupils' knowledge, awareness, attitudes, and values, and was validated by teachers from a neighboring district to ensure clarity and relevance. Data gathering procedures involved securing informed consent, distributing consent letters explaining the purpose and significance of the study, assuring confidentiality and voluntary participation, and administering the survey based on participants' availability. Finally, the collected data were tallied, encoded, and analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly mean and standard deviation, to summarize and interpret teachers' perceptions and the observed effects of CSE on pupils' behavior, ensuring reliable and meaningful findings.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Demographic Profile of The Teacher-Respondents*

The demographic profile of the respondents includes variables such as age, sex, civil status, years in service, highest educational attainment, and number of relevant trainings attended. The data were tallied and presented below.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Respondents Profile

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
20-30	1	4%
31-40	10	40%
41-50	12	48%
51 above	2	8%
<b>Sex</b>		
Female	23	92%
Male	2	4%
<b>Civil Satus</b>		
Single	1	4%
Married	24	96%
Separated	0	0%
Widow	0	0%
<b>Years in Service</b>		
1-5 years	2	8
6-10 years	6	24%
11-15 years	8	32%
16 and above	9	36%
<b>Highest Educational Attainment</b>		
MA Graduate	13	52%
With MA Unit	10	40%

Ph.D/Ed. D Graduate	0	0%
With Ph.D/Ed. D Graduate	0	0%
other	2	8%
<b>Numbers of relevant training/ Seminar attended on CSE</b>		
1-5	11	44%
6 and above	0	0%
None	14	56%

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the teachers who have responded. Most of the teachers are between 41 and 50 years old (about 48%), with the next-largest group aged 31–40 (40%). Only a few are younger than 30 (4 %) or older than 50 (8 %). The staff is overwhelmingly female—roughly 92 % women and just 4 % men. Almost everyone is married (96 %), and only 4 % are single; no respondents are separated or widowed.

When it comes to experience, a solid 36 % have been teaching for 16 years or more, 32 % have 11–15 years, 24 % have 6–10 years, and only 8 % have been in the job for 1–5 years. In terms of education, just over half (52 %) hold a master’s degree, another 40 % have completed master’s-level coursework, and the remaining 8 % have other qualifications—no one reported a Ph.D. or Ed.D.

Finally, training on relevant topics is limited: more than half (56 %) have never attended any such training, while 44 % have taken part in 1–5 sessions. No teacher reported six or more training events.

### *The Teachers' Perceptions on the Level of Implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education*

This section presents the profile of respondents regarding the implementation of comprehensive sexuality education. The tables that follow show respondents' perceptions of the different contributing factors, teachers' perceptions, with items categorized by the factors to which they pertain.

Table 2. Perception of Respondents on Curriculum and Content.

Indicators	Mean	Description	Interpretation
1. The CSE topics are appropriate for the age and developmental level of my elementary pupils.	3.76	Often	High Implementation
2. The content of the CSE curriculum is relevant and applicable to the real-life situations of the learners.	4.00	Often	High Implementation
3. The CSE learning competencies are clearly defined and easy to integrate into key subjects like Science, Health (MAPEH), and ESP	4.20	Often	High Implementation
4. The curriculum provides sufficient information on essential topics such as	4.00	Often	High Implementation

	personal safety, identifying good and bad touch, and proper hygiene.			
5.	The CSE content is presented in a way that is sensitive to the cultural and family values within our community.	3.96	Often	High Implementation
MEAN		3.98	Often	High Implementation

Table 2 contains information about the curriculum and content. As shown in the table above, item 3 had the highest mean of 4.20 and is interpreted as “high implementation”. This means that teachers agree that CSE is easy to integrate into subjects that address sex education and anatomy. On the other hand, item 1 had the lowest mean of 3.76 and is interpreted as “high implementation” as well. This shows that, even though not everyone agrees, the CSE topic is deemed beneficial for the age and development of my elementary students. In addition, this factor had an overall mean of 3.98, indicating “high implementation”. This implies that curriculum and content factor is a often a factor for CSE implementation.

Table 3. Perception of Respondents on Instructional Strategies and Materials.

Indicators	Mean	Description	Interpretation
1. We have sufficient and available DepEd-provided teaching materials (e.g., modules, lesson guides) for CSE.	2.96	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation
2. The recommended teaching strategies (e.g., storytelling, role-playing) are effective for teaching CSE to young learners.	3.80	Often	High Implementation
3. There is an adequate supply of varied and engaging learning resources (e.g., storybooks, posters, videos) to support CSE instruction.	2.84	Often	High Implementation
4. I feel confident and prepared to use different teaching methods to handle sensitive CSE topics in my classroom.	3.68	Often	High Implementation
5. The assessment tools suggested in the curriculum are suitable for measuring pupils' understanding of CSE concepts.	3.32	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation
MEAN	3.32	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation

Table 3 contains information about instructional strategies and materials factor. As shown in the table above, item number 2 had the highest mean of 3.80 and is interpreted as “high implementation”. This means that teachers recommend teaching strategies like storytelling as practical for teaching CSE to young learners. On the other hand, item 3 had the lowest mean of 2.84 and is interpreted as “moderate implementation”. This reveals that having an adequate supply of varied, engaging learning materials is most unlikely to be available. In

addition, this factor had an overall mean of 3.32, indicating “moderate implementation”. This implies that instructional strategies and materials are sometimes an adequate a reason for CSE implementation.

Table 4. Perception of Respondents on School Administrative Support

Indicators	Mean	Description	Interpretation
1. The school administration (Principal/Head Teacher) provides visible and active support for the CSE program.	3.44	Often	High Implementation
2. The school organizes and funds relevant professional development activities (e.g., trainings, LAC sessions) to enhance our competence in teaching CSE.	2.62	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation
3. The school leadership ensures that we have the necessary resources and budget for CSE-related activities.	2.76	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation
4. There is a clear monitoring and evaluation system in place to track the progress of CSE implementation.	3.00	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation
5. The administration fosters a safe and supportive school climate where teachers and pupils can openly discuss CSE-related concerns.	3.20	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation
MEAN	3.06	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation

Table 4 contains information on the school administrative factors. As shown in the table above, item 1 had the highest mean of 3.44 and is interpreted as “high implementation”. This means that teachers see the school administration as a visible provider of support towards the CSE program. On the other hand, item 3 had the lowest mean of 2.76 and is interpreted as “moderate implementation”. This reveals that teachers see the lack of necessary resources and budget for CSE-related activities. In addition, this factor got the overall mean of 3.06, with an interpretation of “sometimes”. This implies that school administrative support can sometimes be an adequate a reason for CSE implementation.

Table 5. Perception of Respondents on Parent and Community Involvement.

Indicators	Mean	Scale	Interpretation
1. The school regularly conducts orientations or meetings to inform parents about the goals and content of the CSE program.	3.08	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation
2. Parents are actively encouraged to participate in school activities that support the health and well-being of pupils.	3.40	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation

3. The school provides resources (e.g., pamphlets, guides) to help parents reinforce CSE lessons at home.	3.04	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation
4. There is strong collaboration between the school and community stakeholders (e.g., Barangay Health Unit, LGU) to support CSE.	2.88	Sometimes	Moderate Implementation
5. The school has an effective mechanism for addressing and managing concerns or feedback from parents about CSE.	2.76	Moderate Extent	Moderate Implementation
MEAN	3.03	Moderate Extent	Moderate Implementation

Table 5 contains information about parent and community involvement. As shown in the table above, item number 2 had the highest mean of 3.40 and is interpreted as “moderate implementation”. This means that parents are allowed to participate in school activities that support their pupil. On the other hand, item 3 had the lowest mean of 2.76 and is interpreted as “moderate implementation”. This suggests that the school providing resources to help implement CSE at home is unlikely. In addition, this factor had an overall mean of 3.03, indicating “moderate implementation”. This implies that school administrative support can sometimes be an adequate a factor for CSE implementation.

### *Perceived Effects of The CSE Implementation on Pupils' Sexual Behavior as Observed by the Teachers*

Table 6. Perception of Respondents on Perceived Effects of CSE Implementation on Pupils' Sexual Behavior in terms of Knowledge and Awareness.

Indicators	Mean	Description	Interpretation
1. Pupils can now identify different body parts and use their proper names.	4.00	High	High Positive Effect
2. Pupils demonstrate a better understanding of personal boundaries and can distinguish between good touch and bad touch.	3.80	High	High Positive Effect
3. Pupils are more aware of basic personal hygiene and health practices.	3.84	High	High Positive Effect
4. Pupils can identify trusted adults they can talk to when they feel unsafe or uncomfortable.	3.60	High	High Positive Effect
5. Pupils show an increased understanding of diverse family roles and the concept of a healthy family structure.	3.76	High	High Positive Effect
6. Pupils are aware of the physical and emotional changes that happen as they grow (e.g., puberty).	3.84	High	High Positive Effect

7. Pupils understand the difference between secrets that are okay and secrets that should be shared with a trusted adult.	3.76	High	High Positive Effect
8. Pupils can identify and question basic gender stereotypes (e.g., "only boys can be strong").	3.48	High	High Positive Effect
9. Pupils can verbalize the concept of giving and asking permission before touching others (basic consent).	3.56	High	High Positive Effect
10. Pupils demonstrate a basic understanding of where babies come from in an age-appropriate manner.	3.52	High	High Positive Effect
MEAN	3.72	High	High Positive Effect

Table 6 contains information about the perception of respondents on the perceived effects of CSE implementation on pupils' sexual behavior in terms of the knowledge and awareness factor. As shown in the table above, item 1 had the highest mean of 4.00 and is interpreted as "high implementation". This means that students can pretty much identify different body parts and use their proper names. On the other hand, item 8 had the lowest mean of 3.48 and is interpreted as "high implementation". This reveals that pupils can most likely identify basic gender stereotyping. In addition, this factor had an overall mean of 3.72, indicating "high implementation". This implies that the perception of respondents on the perceived effects of CSE implementation on pupils' sexual behavior in terms of the knowledge and awareness factor is mostly evident among pupils.

Table 7. Perception of Respondents on Perceived Effects of CSE Implementation on Pupils' Sexual Behavior in terms of Attitudes and Values

Indicators	Mean	Description	Interpretation
1. Pupils show greater respect for their own and others' bodies.	3.84	High	High Positive Effect
2. Pupils display more respectful behavior towards peers, regardless of gender.	3.88	High	High Positive Effect
3. Pupils are more likely to report situations where they or others feel unsafe or are being bullied.	3.84	High	High Positive Effect
4. Pupils demonstrate an improved sense of responsibility for their personal safety and well-being.	3.76	High	High Positive Effect
5. Pupils are more open to asking questions about personal health and safety in a respectful manner.	3.60	High	High Positive Effect
6. Pupils are more confident in saying "no" to unwanted physical contact from peers.	3.84	High	High Positive Effect

7. Pupils show more empathy and kindness towards classmates who may be experiencing bullying or exclusion.	3.72	High	High Positive Effect
8. Pupils are less likely to engage in or laugh at gender-based teasing or jokes.	3.76	High	High Positive Effect
9. Pupils exhibit a more positive attitude towards their own bodies and physical development.	3.60	High	High Positive Effect
10. Pupils demonstrate a greater willingness to communicate their feelings and boundaries to friends and teachers.	3.64	High	High Positive Effect
MEAN	3.73	High	High Positive Effect

Table 7 presents respondents' perceptions of the effects of CSE implementation on pupils' sexual behavior, focusing on the attitudes and values factor. As shown in the table above, item 2 had the highest mean of 3.88 and is interpreted as "high extent". This means that pupils display more respectful behavior towards peers regardless of gender. On the other hand, item 9 had the lowest mean of 3.60 and is interpreted as "high extent". This reveals that pupils are less likely to engage in or laugh at gender-based teasing or jokes. In addition, this factor had an overall mean of 3.73, indicating a "high extent". This implies that respondents' perceptions of the effects of CSE implementation on pupils' sexual behavior, in terms of the attitudes and values factor, are mostly evident among pupils.

### *Correlation Between CSE Implementation Vs. Demographics*

Table 8. Correlation of CSE vs Demographics

Variable 1	Variable 2	Correlation	Interpretation	P-value	Interpretation
Age		-.040	Very Weak Negative Relationship	.850	Not Significant
Sex	Comprehensive Sexuality Education	.041	Very Weak Positive Relationship	.847	Not Significant
Civil Status		.079	Very Weak positive Relationship	.708	Not Significant
Eta ( $\eta$ )					
Years in Service		-.097	Very Weak Negative Relationship	.644	Not Significant

Highest Educational Attainment	-0.117	Very Weak Negative Relationship	.577	Not Significant
Training	-0.185	Very Weak Negative Relationship	.377	Not Significant

Table 8 shows the Spearman correlation between age and CSE Implementation, which indicates a very weak negative relationship ( $\rho = -0.040$ ,  $p = 0.850$ ), suggesting no real link – older and younger teachers implement CSE in almost the same way. For sex, the point biserial correlation showed another very weak relationship ( $r = 0.041$ ,  $p = 0.847$ ), so male and female teachers also show similar levels of CSE implementation. The Eta result for civil status ( $\eta = 0.079$ ,  $p = 0.708$ ) showed the same pattern: a very weak, non-significant relationship, indicating that being single, married, or otherwise does not affect their practices. The Spearman correlation for years of service also showed a very weak negative relationship ( $\rho = -0.097$ ,  $p = 0.644$ ), confirming that teaching experience does not influence how teachers implement CSE. Therefore, age, sex, civil status, and years of service do not affect the CSE implementation.

***Relationship Between the Teachers' Demographic Profile and Their Perceptions of The CSE Implementation***

Table 9. Correlation Between CSE Implementation On Pupils' Sexual Behavior Vs. Demographics

Variable 1	Variable 2	Correlation	Interpretation	P-value	Interpretation
Age		-0.131	Very Weak Negative Relationship	.531	Not Significant
Sex $r_{pb}$		.157	Very Weak Positive Relationship	.453	Not Significant
Civil Status Eta ( $\eta$ )	Pupils' Sexual Behavior	.062	Very Weak Positive Relationship	.770	Not Significant
Years in Service		-0.071	Very Weak Negative Relationship	.735	Not Significant
Highest Educational Attainment		-0.207	Very Weak Negative Relationship	.320	Not Significant

Training	-0.347	Very Negative Relationship	Weak	.089	Not Significant
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Table 9 contains information about the relationship between various teacher characteristics and the implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) with respect to pupils’ sexual behavior. For demographic factors—including age, sex, civil status, years in service, and highest educational attainment—all correlations were very weak and statistically non-significant. Specifically, age showed a weak negative correlation ( $\rho = -0.131, p = 0.531$ ), sex a weak positive correlation ( $r = 0.157, p = 0.453$ ), civil status a very weak association ( $\eta = 0.062, p = 0.770$ ), years in service a weak negative correlation ( $\rho = -0.071, p = 0.735$ ), and educational attainment a weak negative correlation ( $\rho = -0.207, p = 0.320$ ). These findings align with broader research suggesting that teacher demographics such as age, gender, and experience often do not significantly predict instructional quality (Alharbi, 2022; Ugwuozor et al., 2020)

***Relationship Between the Teachers' Perceptions of The CSE Implementation and Its Perceived Effects on Pupils' Sexual Behavior***

This last portion of the chapter addresses the problem of whether there is a relationship between teachers' perceptions of the implementation of CSE and its effect on pupils' sexual behavior.

Table 10. Relationship between Teachers' Perception of the Implementation of CSE and Pupils' Sexual Behavior

Variable 1	Variable 2	Spearman's rho	Interpretation	P-value	Interpretation
CSE implementation	Pupils' sexual behavior	.626	Moderate Relation	.001	Significant

The relationship between teachers' perception of the implementation of CSE and its effect on pupils' sexual behavior is presented in Table 10. The Spearman analysis indicated a moderate, statistically significant association between teachers’ perceptions of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) implementation and pupils’ sexual-behavior, with  $\rho = 0.626$  ( $p = 0.001$ ). Since the p-value is far below the 0.05 threshold, the null hypothesis that no relationship exists is rejected.

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study examined teachers’ perceptions of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in primary institutions and their relationship with pupils’ sexual behavior. Findings revealed that teachers generally hold favorable views of the CSE curriculum, considering it relevant, age-appropriate, and adaptable across subjects, which supports integrated learning. However, while instructional approaches and materials were rated as adequate, there remains a need for

enhanced teacher training and resources to improve confidence in addressing sensitive topics. The study also found that teachers' demographic characteristics, such as age, sex, experience, and educational background, did not significantly influence their perceptions of CSE. Importantly, a significant positive relationship was identified between teachers' perceptions of CSE implementation and pupils' sexual behavior, indicating that more positive and effective teaching of CSE is associated with more responsible student behavior, highlighting the critical role of teachers in shaping learners' knowledge, attitudes, and practices.

### **FURTHER STUDY**

Conduct further research into the effectiveness of CSE and its acceptance among the population by focusing on the perceptions held by parents and members of the community. Create ways to obtain feedback from both teachers and learners.

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